

## **Community Mental Health Centers (CMHC) in Iowa**

### **January 16, 2020**

#### Definition of CMHC

In Iowa, Chapter 230A defines a CMHC as a community mental health center designated in accordance with Chapter 230A. Iowa Administrative Code 441, Chapter 24 defines a CMHC as an organization providing mental health services that is established pursuant to Iowa Code Chapters 225C and 230A. There is no federal definition of a CMHC; however, Medicare has identified conditions of participation for CMHCs. No CMHCs are currently licensed by DIA as Medicare CMHC providers.

#### History of CMHCs

- 1963-President John F. Kennedy signed into law the Mental Retardation Facilities and Community Mental Health Centers Construction Act. This was part of the move to deinstitutionalize individuals with a mental illness and promote community mental health services.
- 1965-Federal funds were made available for construction and staffing grants for CMHCs. As part of the federal funding process, Iowa engaged in a planning process for comprehensive mental health services, including expansion of community mental health services. In 1965, Iowa had 15 identified CMHCs.
- 1982-The Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act replaced the federal construction and staffing grants to CMHCs with Mental Health Block Grants (MHBG) to the states. Iowa law requires DHS to distribute 70% of MHBG funds directly to accredited CMHCs or mental health service providers designated in lieu of a CMHC
- 2011-Iowa Code Chapter 230A Community Mental Health Centers was revised to clarify the CMHC designation process, catchment area definition, target population and eligibility core service requirements.
- 2013-As part of MHDS Redesign the MHDS Regions were required to contract with a CMHC or Federally Qualified Health Center in the region.
- 2014-CMS issued conditions of participation that CMHCs must meet to participate in Medicare. This only applies to CMHCs that are enrolled as Medicare providers and provide partial hospitalization services. No CMHCs in Iowa are currently licensed by DIA as federally recognized CMHCs.

#### Iowa Code Chapter 230A Requirements

- DHS is to designate at least 1 CMHC per catchment area, with the agreement of the CMHC and with input from potential service providers, subject to approval by the MHDS Commission
- A catchment area shall be limited to 1 CMHC unless there are exceptional circumstances for designating more than 1 CMHC in an area
- CMHCs must serve the defined target populations with minimal or no service denials:
  - Individuals of any age who are experiencing a mental health crisis
  - Individuals of any age who have a mental health disorder
  - Adults who have a serious mental illness or a chronic mental illness
  - Children and youth who are experiencing a serious emotional disturbance
  - Any of the above who have a co-occurring disorder, including but not limited to substance abuse, intellectual disability, a developmental disability, brain injury, autism spectrum disorder, or another disability or special health care need
- Defined core services a CMHC must provide to the target population
  - Outpatient services
  - Twenty-four hour emergency services

- Day treatment, partial hospitalization, or psychosocial rehabilitation services
- Screening for admission to state mental health institutes for voluntary patients
- Community support services
- Consultation services
- Education services

#### Status of CMHCs in Iowa

Iowa has 23 accredited CMHCs. Their catchment areas include 88 counties.

- Accredited mental health service providers were previously designated to provide services in counties without a designated CMHC. Two counties are currently unaffiliated with a CMHC or waiver provider due to the closure of a provider. Nine are served by waiver providers.
- 15 of the 23 CMHCs are also licensed outpatient substance use disorder providers
- 1 CMHC is also a Federally Qualified Health Clinic

#### CMHC Application/Designation Process

1. Agency provides written notification of intention to apply for designation as a CMHC and supporting information to MHDS
2. MHDS reviews the notice of intention to apply and supporting information to determine initial eligibility to apply for designation
3. MHDS notifies the applicant that they have either (1) not met initial criteria to apply for designation as a CMHC or (2) has met initial criteria to apply for designation as a CMHC
  - a. Key factors in DHS decision-making process on CMHC designation:
    - Is the catchment area already served by an accredited CMHC
    - Do exceptional circumstances exist that would allow designation of more than 1 CMHC in the catchment area
    - Does the applicant demonstrate capacity to provide the core services defined in Chapter 230A.106 to the target population as defined in Chapter 230A.105
4. If the initial application is approved, the applicant is directed to complete the following:
  - a. Complete Chapter 24 application and accreditation process if not already accredited
  - b. Submit a formal request for designation along with proof of Chapter 24 accreditation
  - c. Designation is presented and must be approved by the MHDS Commission
  - d. If designation is approved by the Commission, enters into an agreement with MHDS
  - e. as described in Chapter 230A.103(3)